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FILE U-2 General

MEMORANDUM FOR : Chief, Materiel Division, Office of Special Activities
SUBJECT : U-2 Problems

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25X1A9a1. With the arrival of [REDACTED] 3153 of 28 February from Colonel [REDACTED] regarding the Q-bay pressurization problem, it seems we now have a fairly complete cycle of difficulties as regards the airframe to match the problems we had with the camera lately. As I understand it, we are less than happy about (a) Q-bay pressurization and the high failure rate of hatch and canopy seals, (b) the DC generator, (c) the Lear autopilot, (d) the inverter, and (e) the ALQ-49 and ALQ-51.

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2. It is not my purpose to beat you about the ears as being personally liable for all of these difficulties, but I do think we must tighten up our relationship with [REDACTED] and make him painfully aware of those of the above problems which are his responsibility. Specifically I believe we need to press harder than we do on flight tests for the new generator/alternator and inverter problems, and I think we should certainly do something about the autopilot and its continuous history of malfunctions. From time to time everyone agrees that the autopilot is in need of support and redesign, but these conclusions are never reflected into action. Have we asked Lockheed for an ECP on this autopilot, and if so, have they responded?

3. As far as Q-bay pressurization goes, about all that I am aware of in the way of improvement is that we are changing the seals faster than before. Is there some basic design problem here, or has the manufacturer, like the generator builder, attempted to cut costs by substituting inferior materials? I do not think we can let the kind of ineffectiveness we have had stand on the record without doing something about it. Will you please let me know what we can do in all of these areas.

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[REDACTED]
Deputy Assistant Director
(Special Activities)

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